



Student: **Michael Higley-Vance**

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Academic integrity: All work submitted in each course must be your own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by your instructor. Knowingly submitting another person's work as your own, without properly citing the source of the work, is considered plagiarism. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course. It may also result in academic dismissal from the University.

EL7003-8

Dr. Linda Collins

Instructional Design and Engaging E-Learning Activities

**Activity # 8: Signature Assignment –
Creating an e-Learning Course**

Comments: This paper was written using previous papers throughout the course. In addition this paper serves to provide the overall course reflection of designing an online course and the link below serves to fulfill the overall course example. Username: [m20tiggstudent](#) Password: [Student](#)
https://www.coursesites.com/webapps/login/?new_loc=/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp

Faculty Use Only

Hi, Michael, first of all, I want to thank you for sharing your experience in your LMS as you created your activities and developed your class throughout this course. Your introduction to the signature project provides an engaging setting. Your comment that "Interactive online learning environments provide

learners the space and freedom to thrive successfully where they feel valued, connected, and engaged in” shows the excitement about e-learning and the empowerment students can have with their learning experience. You have clearly detailed your experience as well as the tools you have used, the objectives for using specific tools and approaches, and the importance of addressing a variety of learning styles in your content. The icebreakers have set the foundation for an interactive and engaging environment for students and also demonstrate the expectations for students to collaborate throughout the class. You included the importance of the questions and comments that are posted throughout the discussions – this fosters critical thinking with and among students. Excellent work bringing all of these activities together both in this signature project and in the LMS. Congratulations on completing your class! I have enjoyed working with you with you once again. Please let me know if I can help with anything in the future. Continued success on your academic career ☺ Dr. Collins

Dr. Linda D. Collins 21 8.9 February 2, 2014

Creating an e-Learning Course: A Reflection of the Process

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Creating an e-Learning Course: A Reflection of the Process

Educational institutions around the world are increasingly using technology for teaching and training. Over the past decade and a half there has been an increased interest in integrating information technology, social media, and learning technologies into traditional teaching practices (Skyler, 2009). Various forms of e-Learning now exist that include presenting content online, using social media to create learning environments, and incorporate synchronous and asynchronous instructor-led sessions. The number of online learning systems, environments, courses, and trainings continue to increase and are being embraced by these institutions as learning technology improves (Skyler, 2009; Lane, 2013).

Interactive online learning environments provide learners the space and freedom to thrive successfully where they feel valued, connected, and engaged in (Brindley, Walti, & Blaschke, 2009). Taking an online class is now, more than ever, a reality for many potential learners. What sets the online classroom apart from the traditional classroom is the way students interact within the online environment to learn. Activities that encourage interactivity and collaboration

help foster positive learning environments (Moallem, 2007). Each activity within this course was created to address the learning objectives and expected performance outcomes of a diverse learning community.

Course Design

Designing an online course for a learning environment much different than the traditional classroom can be difficult depending on the content knowledge and designing experience of the instructor. Many online courses can be designed from simple pre-made templates or designed fully from scratch without much effort or experience. This literacy course was designed using the constructivist approach and includes collaborative work, reflective practices, interactivities, and skill acquisition. In order to design an online course that is interactive and engaging, the designer must possess background knowledge sufficient to support the content, pedagogy, and technical course development (Lane, 2013).

Learning style. Constructivism supports active and reflective teaching and learning processes along with a full immersion and active engagement in the course curriculum and activities (Gaspay, Dardan, & Legorreta, 2008). Additionally, researchers have concluded that social interaction and collaboration fosters self-motivated learning. Student satisfaction, perceived skill development, and self-reported learning help improve student's perceived learning and measure of effectiveness (Gaspay, et al., 2008).

Learning Management System

The learning management system (LMS) that was used in this course design and implementation was Blackboard Learn. Blackboard, a technology leader in education has several innovative online teaching and learning enhancements that will help improve and revolutionize the online learning experience (Augustine, 2013). Blackboard Learn provided a

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Comment [1]: Do you feel these provide the personal touch and deep learning experiences as when instructors create their own classes?

learning management system that was structured enough for the online learning environment while providing a unique learning experience not found in other learning systems.

Course Selection

Content literacy has shown to be one area of learning proficiency that has been a constant challenge in education (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008). According to Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) literacy is “commonly thought of as a basic set of skills, widely adaptable and applicable to all kinds of texts and reading situations” (p. 40). Researchers have shown that one of the most reliable ways to help students improve literacy skills is through rigorous and relevant activities that motivate and engage students in the learning process (Daggett, 2005; Hyslop, 2010). In an action research article, written by Emily Calhoun in 2002, which focused on teaching literacy, it was reported that most students in the study showed overall gains in all subjects simply because of the added literacy focus in reading. Educational institutions and scholars around the world have consistently reported that a focus on literacy in the content areas exponentially helps to increase student achievement across all disciplines.

Course Overview

In this course four literacy strategies were introduced in the content areas of reading, math, and science. Learners were required to use the literacy strategies, which focused on the learning objectives, to complete the content performance tasks. Each lesson began with a lesson introduction, the learning task or tasks utilizing one or more literacy strategies, and incorporated a variety of interactivities. The learning environment and learning tasks included images, video, and audio components, which helped reinforce student objectives and performance goals. Information and technology communication (ICT) resources such as discussion boards, email, Skype, Voice Thread, and other relevant educational related online applications were also used

as teaching and learning tools to enhance and encourage learner engagement. Course content provided at, or just below, grade level to decrease the variable that the learning content could be a distracting factor. The assessments created evaluated the learners' application of the literacy skill or skills throughout each lesson task and cumulating activity. Additionally, a short learner survey was provided at the end of the overall course to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson components and ICT applications.

Course Considerations

One issue, considered during the development of this course, that addresses collaboration and online tools, was the problem of locating good quality subject specific and skill specific content information. However, the introductory activities and icebreakers were created with these concerns in mind and helped to establish a comfort level with the material and learning environment. An advantage to these types of tasks is the ongoing discourse, which may develop, from the discussion board posts. Another benefit of these tasks is that they require learners to pay special attention to the comments and questions posed to them, which will support active engagement and learning.

Establishing behavioral and academic procedures and expectations for collaborative activities was a priority during the course development. With online courses, use of traditional methods do not translate well, so the instructor must develop other methods of keeping collaborative groups actively engaged. Designing interactivities and collaboration tasks must ensure active engagement of all learners, an understanding of multiple perspectives, and allow learners the opportunity to reflect.

Within the main course activities learners completed learning tasks independently and dependently, depending on the technology being used and the performance expectations required

to accomplish the objective or tasks. Tasks included an array of online resources that include images, videos, avatars, story slideshows, Google applications, audio components, and many others designed to help reinforce the learning objectives and performance goals (Ebner, Holzinger, & Maurer, 2007; Tunks, 2012). Information and communication technology (ICT) resources such as discussion boards and social media applications: Voice Thread, Google, word maps, and other relevant educational related online applications were also used to enhance learner performance outcomes. However, the number of Web 2.0 resources embedded into the course brought concern about learners lacking the online skills necessary to navigate their learning environment. Therefore the activities and tasks were developed with this in mind and were designed to help promote active learning communities using a variety of resource tools, while deepening the learners understanding of specific literacy strategies.

Conclusion

Several critical pieces of the original course design, tasks, and considerations described in previous papers throughout EL7003-8, have been reconsidered in this paper. Each task encourages and demands interactivity between learners regardless of the learner's level of online learning experience. The means for completing these tasks were created with differentiation in mind to best meet a variety of learning levels and online learning experiences. Tasks were created to meet various learning styles to include social learning, although many of the tasks could be completed intrapersonally even though they were created with social characteristics. Web 2.0 tools provide learners with a flexible means by which to accomplish learning objectives and connection to the content and learning environment. Utilizing Web 2.0 resources is merely a strategy used to engage, enhance, and promote interactivity in the 21st century.

Literacy Online Lessons

Icebreaker Activity #1

Task: Acrostic Poem – 1st introductory task for the beginning of the online Literacy course.

Objectives: The learners will write an acrostic poem using the letters of the learner's first name. The learner will reflect on the acrostic poem of one other learner, and provide one comment and ask one question of that learner. Learners will then be required to interact with their partner by reflecting on the comment and question posed to them about their poem.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: two days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS) discussion feature board
- YouTube video presentation
- Google spreadsheet

Preparation: Prior to the start of the literacy course an activity page, within Blackboard, will be created entitled "Acrostic Poem Icebreaker". A Google spreadsheet will be created and linked within the blackboard course for learners to place their names and find partners interested in completing the task. A discussion thread will be created within the LMS course entitled "ACROSTIC Poems".

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled "Acrostic Poem Icebreaker" located on the left side pane of the online course window. Once on the activity page

learners will find written instructions and a video presentation describing the icebreaker activity, the objectives, and the expected learner performance outcomes. The video presentation and written instructions will provide learners with instructions on how to participate and locate their activity partners using a Google spreadsheet link. Learners will submit their poems using the discussion board forum within the first day. On the second day, learners will use the discussion board to submit their reflective comment and question about their partner's poem. Finally learners will reply to the question and comment posed to their poems.

Anticipated Activity Steps:

1. Enter the Blackboard learning system.
2. Select the "Acrostic Poem Icebreaker" activity.
3. View the video presentation.
4. Read the written instructions.
5. Select the Google spreadsheet link and sign up to participate next to a partner who needs a partner.
6. Enter the discussion thread and add your Acrostic poem.
7. Locate your partner's completed Acrostic poem and reply to it with a comment and question. (If you are choosing to participate but do not have a partner please post your poem and then comment and question the poem of your instructor.)
8. Finally learners will reply to the question and comment posted to their poem (with at least 100-150 words).

Facilitator's Notes: This activity is designed to take two days and as long as learners participate learners will be successful. It will work with virtual classes of any size and any odd student will be paired with the instructor. This activity is worth 5 bonus points towards the final assignment and learners who choose not to participate will receive an email from the instructor offering guidance and support along with information about why icebreaker activities are so important.

Icebreaker Activity #2

Task: What Disney Character Are You – 2nd introductory task for the beginning of the online Literacy course.

Objectives: Learners will complete a personality survey to determine which Disney character they are most like. Learners will write a short reflective essay summarizing the results of the personality survey. Learners will reply to another learner's reflective essay and demonstrate appropriate interactivity within this task.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: three days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS) discussion feature board
- YouTube video presentation
- External personality survey links

Preparation: Prior to the start of the literacy course an activity page will be created entitled “What Disney Character Are You”. A discussion thread will be created within the LMS course entitled “What Disney Character Are You”.

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled “What Disney Character Are You” located on the left pane of the online course window. On this activity page learners will find written instructions and a video presentation describing the icebreaker activity, the objectives, and the expected learner performance outcomes. The video presentation and written instructions will provide learners with instructions on how to complete the Disney survey and essay. Learners will be instructed to submit their reflective character essays using the discussion board forum. Finally, learners will use the discussion board to reply to another learner’s character reflection essay.

Anticipated Activity Steps:

1. Enter the Blackboard learning system.
2. Select the “What Disney Character Are You” activity.
3. View the video presentation.
4. Read the written instructions.
5. Select and complete one of the survey links provided.
6. Once you have identified the Disney Character you are most like, enter the discussion board and add your character reflection essay following the provided rubric, (with at least 200-300 words).
7. Finally, reply to another learner’s character reflection essay (using at least 100-200 words).

Facilitator’s Notes: This activity will work with virtual classes of any size and is scheduled to last no more than 3 days. This activity is worth 5 bonus points towards the final assignment and learners who choose not to participate will receive an email from the instructor offering guidance and support along with information about why icebreaker activities are so important.

Martin Luther King Activity #3

CLOSE Reading Tasks 1, 2, & 3:

This literacy strategy for reading, called CLOSE Reading, teaches learners how to read for depth of understanding and comprehension (Fisher, & Frey, 2012).

Task 1, 2, & 3 Objectives:

Learners will practice CLOSE reading to enhance their literacy skills and gain a deeper understanding of an excerpt from Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior’s “I Have A Dream Speech”. Using the excerpt provided learners will collaboratively brain storm ideas, annotate important text and vocabulary, make connections within the text, comment and ask questions within group discussions, and synthesize information shared and read that will foster a deeper comprehension and understanding of Dr. King’s speech.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: Four (4) days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS)
- YouTube video presentation
- Discussion boards
- Google documents

Preparation: Prior to the start of this literacy activity a page within Blackboard will be created entitled “Literacy in Reading”. The page will be created to include the following: (1) an overview of the activity and tasks, (2) a Youtube introduction video created by the instructor, (3) a Google doc that includes an excerpt of Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior’s “I Have A Dream” speech, and (4) a number of pre-created discussions to accompany the learning tasks. The Google document will be copied and used with a pre-determined number of collaborative learning groups where learners will work together to annotate the excerpt provided. Discussion threads will be created within the activity to encourage accountable talk and to ensure academically productive talk is occurring within the discussion threads. Using discussion boards allows learners to share and interact while allowing the instructor to provide feedback and guidance specifically related to the task objective(s). A final collaborative project will be included and will be outline in more detail following the outline of these tasks.

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled “#4 MLK’s Speech” located on the left side pane of the online course window. Once on the activity page learners will find written instructions and a video presentation describing the overall collaborative learning activity, the objectives, and the expected learner performance outcomes. The video presentation will provide learners with an appropriate set and the introductory written instructions will provide learners with an overview of how to complete the overall activity tasks. Learners will be instructed to complete each section of the activity one at a time. During collaborative tasks learners will use different colored text to distinguish themselves from one another. Other sections and tasks located on the overall activity page will be unavailable for learners to view until the appropriate time. After viewing the Youtube video and reading the introductory instructions learners will be required to participate in a discussion about the title of Dr. King’s speech using the discussion board feature provided in the LMS. The following tasks will first include a work alone task, then a collaborative annotation task, and finally a reflective writing assignment. Throughout each task learners will be required to participate in collaborative discussion threads related to the previous task or assignment to determine appropriate mastery of the learning objective(s).

Anticipated Activity Steps:

Day 1

9. Enter the Blackboard learning system.
10. Select the “#4 MLK’s Speech” activity.
11. View the video presentation set.
12. Read the written instructions.

13. Complete the introductory discussion task.

Day 2

14. Read the entire excerpt of “I Have A Dream” speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
15. Select MLK Task #1 – Private Think Time and download the attached file. Complete this task on your own before moving on to task one discussion.
16. Enter the task one discussion thread and reply by providing feedback to the questions asked by the instructor.

Day 3

17. Read Task #2 instructions and select the appropriate collaborative group link found in this task.
18. Using the Google doc provided, collaboratively work with your partner to annotate the excerpt. Each learner should select a unique color text during this annotation task. Be sure to underline key words, phrases, or sentences. Write comments or questions in the space provided. Circle important sections of text. Number related points or lines of text.
19. Enter the task two discussion thread and reply by providing feedback to the questions asked by the instructor.

Day 4

20. Read Task #3 – Reflection, and complete the task by answering the reflective questions asked by the instructor.

Facilitator’s Notes: This portion of the activity is designed to take 4 days and includes 3 different tasks. It will work with online classes of any size but is designed for small collaborative groups for easy facilitation by the instructor. Learners who are not evenly matched will be partnered with an already paired group. The tasks within this portion of the activity are worth 40 points towards the final overall grade.

Task 4 Objectives:

Learners will demonstrate CLOSE reading by creating a slide presentation detailing their depth of understanding and knowledge of a poem written by Dr. Maya Angelou entitled “Abundant Hope”. Using the poem, “Abundant Hope”, learners will work collaboratively to create a slide presentation (8-12 slides) demonstrating a depth of comprehension and understanding of Dr. Maya Angelou’s poem by identifying the central theme of the poem, including personal insight, and providing textual evidence to support insight and identified theme.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: Three (3) days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS)
- YouTube video resource
- Dr. Maya Angelou’s poem, “Abundant Hope”
- Discussion board
- Google document

- Google slide presentation

Preparation: Prior to the start of this literacy activity a page within Blackboard will be created entitled “#4 MLK’s Speech”. In addition to the aforementioned learning tasks a fourth and final project will be included to provide a summative measure of learner mastery. A Google slide presentation will be created and reproduced accordingly to match the number of collaborative groups in the course. A Google document will be included offering the poem in a CLOSE reading format to encourage learners to use the strategy learned in previous tasks. A discussion thread will be created to encourage accountable talk and to ensure academically productive talk is occurring to accomplish the final project task.

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled “#4 MLK’s Speech” located on the left side pane of the online course window. Once on the activity page learners will find a video resource and poem by Dr. Maya Angelou entitled “Abundant Hope”. Learners will discover a collaborative learning project detailing the objectives and expected performance outcomes. The video resource will provide learners with an appropriate set for the collaborative task. Learners will be encouraged to complete the provided Google Document and guided questions before beginning their collaborative slide presentation. At this time previous sections and tasks located on the overall activity page will be available for learners to view until the end of the course. After reading the poem, reviewing the Youtube video resource, and completing the Google practice document learners will be required to contact their partner and participate in a discussion addressing the questions provided by the instructor.

Anticipated Activity Steps:

Day 5, 6, & 7

21. View Task four’s introductory Youtube video resource reciting Dr. Angelou’s poem.
22. Read the entire poem by Dr. Maya Angelou.
23. Select the Google practice document to complete a CLOSE reading of the poem.
24. Contact your partner to discuss the instructor’s questions.
25. Using the Google slide presentation provided, collaboratively work with your partner to create a slide presentation about the poem “Abundant Hope”. You must include a title slide, 3 slides per partner, and a credits slide (8-12 slides).

Facilitator’s Notes: This activity is designed to take three days and includes one collaborative final project task. This task will work with online classes of any size but is designed for small collaborative groups for easy facilitation. Learners who are not evenly match will be partnered with an already paired group or may work on their own. This activity is worth 30 points towards a learner’s final grade. Learners who are unable to contact their partner by the end of day two will be allowed to work independently or will be matched with a partner who is in a similar situation. Additional days to complete the final task may be given if needed or requested.

Literacy in Math Activity #4

Literacy in math Task: This literacy strategy for reading, reinforcing comprehension, teaches learners to make connections, visualize, determine importance, define vocabulary, and synthesize text while they are reading.

Objectives: The learner will practice comprehension strategies such as: making connections, visualizing, determining importance, and synthesizing information to create a VoiceThread showing how they completed a given math problem. Learners will interact with one another's VoiceThreads by asking questions and posting comments.

Sub Objectives: Define mathematical terms, relate the term to everyday life, and become more articulate talking math.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: Two (2) days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS)
- Voki presentation via Youtube and Screen-O-Matic
- Discussion boards
- VoiceThread
- Google doc

Preparation: Prior to the start of this literacy activity a page within Blackboard will be created entitled “#6 Math Literacy”. The page will be created to include the following: (1) a Youtube introduction video created by the instructor using Voki, (2) an overview of the activity task and concept map creation, (3) instructions on how to create and complete the VoiceThread task, and (4) an instructor led discussion to accompany the learning activity. The VoiceThread instructions will be provided within the activity page. Discussion threads will be created within the activity for learners to reflect on their completed goals throughout the interactivity task.

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled “#5 Math Literacy” located on the left side pane of the online course window. Once on the activity page learners will find a video Voki presentation via YouTube and written instructions describing the overall interactivity, the objectives, and the expected learner performance outcomes. Learners will be required to complete each section of the activity within two days. During this task, learners will each be given a mathematical term or scenario in which they will have to create a VoiceThread and word map that will define and explain to other learners their mathematical situation. The first task will require learners to create a word map that encompasses the vocabulary terms found in the mathematical situation. Next the learner will create a VoiceThread and later be required to interact with other learner's VoiceThreads. Finally, additional credit will be given to learners who choose to participate in the discussion threads of this activity. During this task learners are not required to participate in discussion threads however, learners will be required to interact with another learner's VoiceThread. Learners will post their VoiceThread links on the provided Google doc allowing the instructor and learners access to view and interact with their math stories.

Anticipated Activity Steps:**Day 1**

26. Enter the Blackboard learning system.
27. Select the “#5 Math Literacy” activity.
28. View the video presentation.
29. Read the written instructions.
30. Create a mathematical terms word map using the link provided.
31. Review instructions on how to create or log into VoiceThread.
32. Begin creating a VoiceThread.

Day 2

33. Finish completing the VoiceThread.
34. Post VoiceThread links on the Google doc provided in this activity.
35. Interact with another learner’s VoiceThread by asking at least one question via voice comment and posting at least one comment via voice or text.

Facilitator’s Notes: This portion of the activity is designed to take two days and includes 2 different tasks. This interactivity will work with online classes of any size. The tasks within this portion of the activity are worth 25 points towards the final overall grade.

Literacy in Science Activity #5

Literacy in science Task: This literacy strategy for reading encourages content experts by teaching learners to concentrate on one part of a larger concept or idea. Each learner’s piece is essential for overall understanding for all learners.

Objectives: The learner will read for depth of knowledge and understanding; researching additional information, if needed, to become a content expert given a piece of a larger science concept. Learners will create a personal Voki providing a set and introduction. Learners will create flashcards using Brainscape to teach other experts their particular jigsaw piece.

Sub Objectives: Define science terms, make connections between science and real world phenomenon, and become more knowledgeable in science content.

Method: Asynchronous/Synchronous

Time required: Three (3) days

Materials:

- Blackboard learning management system (LMS)
- Voki presentation via Youtube and Screen-O-Matic
- Discussion board
- Voki
- Brainscape

Preparation: Prior to the start of this literacy activity a page within Blackboard will be created entitled “#6 Science Literacy”. The page will be created to include the following: (1) a Youtube introduction video created by the instructor using Voki, (2) an overview of the activity and tasks, (3) instructions on how to create a Voki and example, (4) instructions on how to create and complete the Brainscape task, (5) a place to put it all together, and finally (6) a discussion thread to reflect on the learning objectives and required tasks.

Process: Learners will enter Blackboard and select the activity entitled “#6 Science Literacy” located on the left side pane of the online course window. Once on the activity page learners will find a video Voki presentation via YouTube and written instructions describing the overall interactivity, the objectives, and the expected learner performance outcomes. Learners will be required to complete each section of the activity within three days. During this task, learners will each be given one part of a larger science concept or idea, each different from the other. The first task will require learners to create a Voki introducing their particular piece. Next learners will seek out information about their part to gain a deeper understanding. Once learners have learned all they can about their individual parts they will create flashcards using Brainscape. A discussion thread will be provided for learners to interact with each other sharing ideas and information.

Anticipated Activity Steps:

Day 1

1. Enter the Blackboard learning system.
2. Select the “#6 Science Literacy” activity.
3. View the video presentation set.
4. Read the activity objectives.
5. Research the content piece you’ve been given. Learn as much as you can before moving on to the next task.

Day 2

6. Review how to create a Voki.
7. Create the introductory Voki using the information learned during your content research.
8. Review how to create flashcards using Brainscape.
9. Create a number of Brainscape flashcards helping other learners to gain content knowledge in the particular piece you were given.

Day 3

10. Post your Voki and flashcards.
11. Enter the activity discussion thread and interact with other learners by asking questions and providing constructive feedback. You are encouraged to interact in activity discussion throughout the activity.

Facilitator’s Notes: This portion of the activity is designed to take three days and includes 4 different performance tasks. Some science parts may repeat depending on the number of

learners enrolled. This interactivity and tasks will work with online classes of any size. The tasks within this portion of the activity are worth 30 points towards the final overall grade.

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